

**TOWN OF SOUTH BETHANY  
TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES  
JULY 29, 2021  
3:00 P.M.**

**Call Meeting to Order**

Mayor Saxton called the July 29, 2021, Town Council Budget Workshop Meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**Announcement of Attendance and Absences**

In attendance were Mayor Saxton, Councilmembers, Dick Oliver, Randy Bartholomew, Tim Shaw, and Edie Dondero; Chief Lovins, Town Manager Maureen Hartman, and Administrative Specialist, Janet Powell. Councilwoman Sue Callaway and Councilman Abbott had excused absences. Virtual attendance: 4.

**Public Comment**

Maria Vershel, 16 Seaside Drive, gave a summary of the efforts of the FEMA Ad Hoc Committee and requested that Council continue the Committee and hire an engineer to review all FEMA LOMR documentation and FEMA answers to the LOMR questions.

**Review and discussion of renovations to Town Hall**

Mayor Saxton asked Council if there was an appetite to move forward with expanding Town Hall above and beyond the two previously presented Schematics. Schematic 1 to renovate and secure the safety of the front lobby, and Schematic 2 to secure the front lobby and add a Council caucus room and a storage room. Councilmembers questioned the issue of the current parking and additional parking spots. Andrew Lyons, Project Manager of GMB Architects explained parking would only be an issue if you increase the occupancy to the building. Mr. Lyons stated that Schematics 1 and 2 would not increase the occupancy but adding a community room would. This would be an issue since there is no space to increase parking spots. Upon discussion, the consensus of the Council is not to move beyond what was already presented. Chairmen Oliver and Bartholomew were not convinced that a Council caucus room is necessary, stating they would like to be fiscally conservative. Councilman Shaw stated if the storage room is needed, we should consider adding the Council caucus room at the same time versus adding the caucus room later, since it would be cost effective. Mayor Saxton and Councilwoman Dondero felt a Council caucus room is acceptable but want more details on the costs estimates. Mayor Saxton asked Town Manager Hartman to provide updated estimates on Schematic 1 and 2 for the August 13, 2021 meeting. Mayor Saxton also suggested once we have the estimates, he wants to notify the property owners of the justification and costs of the Town Hall renovations.

**Review and discussion of changes to Chapter 42, Building Construction, §42-12A and §42-16**

Councilman Shaw introduced the draft Synopsis of Amending the Code of South Bethany, Chapter 42, Building Construction. The draft ordinance amends Chapter 42, Building Construction §42-12 to Permit the use of fuel powered generators and air compressors that conform to the OSHA noise level safety limits when electric service cannot be provided and to clarify that home standby generators are excepted from associated equipment restrictions as long as they also meet noise level limits; and §42-16 to make violations of the provisions of this chapter Civil penalties rather than Criminal offenses. Mayor Saxton requested the preparation of the First Reading to Chapter 42 Building Construction §42-12A and §42-16 for the August 13, 2021 Town Council meeting.

### **Discussion of Periods of Prohibited Construction**

Councilwoman Dondero briefly discussed Periods of Prohibited Construction §42-14.3 and felt the language or definition of construction is ambiguous. She stated construction work includes interior work, such as painting, tiling, installing carpet, which causes a burden to homeowners limiting times when the work can occur. Councilman Oliver asked Council to review “no construction work shall be conducted after 6pm” and consider changing the time to 5pm. Mayor Saxton requested Councilwoman Dondero meet with Code Enforcement Officer Joe Hinks to create a draft of the language or definition of construction and present it to Charter and Code for review.

### **Review and discussion FEMA Response to LOMR Questions and discussion of FEMA Ad Hoc Committee**

Councilman Bartholomew stated the FEMA Ad Hoc committee would like to continue and possibly hire an engineering consultant to review the FEMA responses regarding preliminary LOMRs and review any future LOMRs once received. Maria Varshel, member of the FEMA Ad Hoc committee, felt there were multiple conflicting discrepancies in the FEMA responses and offered references of engineers to Council for consideration. Mayor Saxton felt that FEMA answered the preliminary LOMR questions well. Mayor Saxton stated he was not comfortable spending money on an engineer since the Town previously hired an engineer in the past and that the engineer did not recommend an appeal to FEMA. Mayor Saxton suggested Council decide at the August 13, 2021 Town Council meeting whether to continue with the FEMA Ad Hoc Committee. Mayor Saxton also stressed that he is requesting a Councilmember chair the FEMA Ad Hoc committee.

### **Review and discussion of overgrown vegetation impeding in Town Rights-of-Way**

Mayor Saxton voiced his concern regarding the maintenance of property owners overgrown vegetation impeding in Town rights-of-way and felt Council needs to educate the property owners on their responsibility to maintain the overgrowth. Councilwoman Dondero concurred.

### **Adjournment**

Motion by Councilman Oliver, seconded by Councilman Shaw, to adjourn the July 29, 2021, Town Council Workshop at 4:27 p.m. Motion carried 7-0.